

Remarks

The Office Action of November 15, 2005 has been carefully considered. The above amendments, together with the remarks below, are believed sufficient to place the present application in condition for allowance. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claim 1 has been amended to clarify that the pluralities of ridges extend in two different predetermined directions, wherein those directions are in the plane of the surface on which those ridges are provided. Applicant respectfully believes that claim 1, as previously presented, defined the “at least two predetermined directions” in this manner, and therefore no new matter is involved. More importantly, as set forth below, Applicant believes that this clarifying amendment of claim 1 overcomes any rejection on the basis of Sawyer (U.S. Patent No. 1,531,983).

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1, 3, 4 and 8 as being anticipated by Sawyer. In response to Applicant’s previous arguments with respect to Sawyer, the Examiner stated that “[t]he applicant only amended the claims to say the ridges extend along the plane of the surface, which they do in Sawyer, and not that they extend at least two different direction along the plane of the surface.” The Examiner went on to note that claim 9 includes the limitation that the ridges extend in at least two different directions along the plane of the surfaces, and therefore claim 9 was not rejected under Sawyer.

However, like claim 9, claim 1 as previously presented stated that at least one surface of each of the sheets includes “a plurality of spaced-apart ridges which extend in a predetermined direction along the plane of said at least one surface,” and that the “pluralities of ridges extend in at least two different predetermined directions.” In other words, it is these

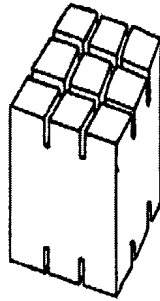
predetermined directions which are along the plane of the surface on which the ridges are provided. Claim 1 has been amended to further clarify this, and Applicant therefore believes that claim 1, like claim 9, is not anticipated by Sawyer.

The Examiner also rejected claims 1, 3, 6, 8, 9, 10, 12 and 14 as being anticipated by either Piper (U.S. Patent No. 2,698,915) or Adie (U.S. Patent No. 3,043,730). Applicant respectfully disagrees with these rejections.

With respect to Piper, the Examiner has asserted that the top plate (17) includes ridges (conductors 15) and that the area between these ridges “which extend into the middle layer, can be considered the ridges in the middle sheet.” However, the areas between the conductors (15) in Piper are empty, since these conductors are simply positioned on the upper surface of the phosphor layer (13). In other words, there are no ridges on the upper surface of the phosphor layer (13). Thus, even if one considers the conductors (15) to be a plurality of spaced-apart ridges on the bottom surface of the top plate (17), these ridges clearly do not nest between a plurality of ridges on the upper surface of the phosphor layer (13), as recited by claim 1. Similarly, the upper surface of the phosphor layer (13) does not include a plurality of spaced-apart ridges which matingly engage the ridges (i.e., conductors 15) on the bottom surface of the top plate (17), as recited by claim 9. For these reasons, independent claims 1 and 9 (as well as those depending therefrom) are not anticipated by Piper.

As for Adie, the Examiner has taken the position that the middle slab (10) includes discontinuous ridges comprising the area between the ridges (14) in the outer sheets. Applicant respectfully believes that the grid of square regions provided in the top and bottom surfaces of the middle slab (10) cannot properly be considered “a plurality of spaced-apart

ridges which extend in a predetermined direction.” Provided below is a representative sketch depicting the upper surface of the middle slab (10) of Adie:



As the Examiner is aware, the words of a claim must be given their plain meaning unless the Applicant has provided a clear definition in the specification. MPEP § 2111.01. The “plain meaning” is simply the ordinary meaning of the claim term in question *Id.* With respect to “ridges,” that term is generally understood to mean a raised strip. *Webster's Third New International Dictionary of the English Language Unabridged* 1953 (Philip Babcock Gove ed., Miriam-Webster Inc. 2002). A grid of square protrusions, as shown in the representative sketch of Adie above cannot be considered a plurality of spaced-apart ridges. These protrusions do not represent raised strips, rather they are a collection of individual protrusions and not “ridges” as recited in independent claims 1 and 9. As such, Applicant believes independent claims 1 and 9 (as well as those depending therefrom) are not anticipated by Adie.

It is believed that the above represents a complete response to the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102, and places the present application in condition for allowance. Reconsideration is therefore respectfully requested.

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Respectfully submitted,

By Clayton L. Kuhnell
Clayton L. Kuhnell
Registration No. 48,691
Attorney for Applicant
Dinsmore & Shohl LLP
1900 Chemed Center
255 East Fifth Street
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202
(513) 977-8377

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